



LEWIS & CLARK CITY-COUNTY Health Department

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East Helena Lead Education and Abatement Program

Blood-Lead Screening Offered in East Helena Sept. 10-12

The Lead Education and Abatement Program (LEAP) of the Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department will host a free blood-lead screening in East Helena Sept. 10-12.

Any resident of East Helena may participate, but the screening is especially aimed at children between the ages of 9 months and 6 years.

“Kids in this age range are at the highest risk of having an elevated blood-lead level because small children put everything in their mouths and are down on the floor or outside in the dust and dirt,” said Debb Tillo, an environmental health specialist with LEAP.

Blood will be drawn from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the LEAP office in Room 201 of East Helena City Hall. Reservations are required to prevent long lines. Call Debb or Jan at 457-8583 to set up an appointment.

As an incentive, every child who is screened will get a coupon for a free, large, one-topping pizza and a soft drink.

“The only way parents can know for sure whether their children have lead in their blood is to have a screening test, and this is the perfect opportunity,” Tillo said. “The testing is quick, simple, and free to the residents of the East Helena area.”

Lead may be found in many places in the environment, including:

- paint and dust in homes built before 1978;
- dust and soil outdoors;
- water pipes;
- old painted toys;
- dishes and imported pottery;
- fishing sinkers;
- bullets;
- vinyl mini-blinds; and
- hobby supplies.

When lead builds up in a person’s bloodstream, it can damage health in many ways, including:

- nervous system and kidney damage;
- decreased muscle and bone growth;

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- hearing damage;
- decreased IQ, attention-deficit and hypersensitivity disorders, learning disabilities;
- speech, language, and behavior problems; and
- poor muscle coordination.

Screening results are usually available within 10 business days. If lead levels are elevated, LEAP staff are available to conduct a free home visit and environmental assessment to determine the source of the lead.

“In most cases, eliminating the environmental exposure and ensuring that the child gets enough iron, calcium, and vitamin C in their diet will help protect against lead poisoning and help bring an elevated lead level down,” Tillo said.

For more information about lead exposure and its impacts on health or to schedule an environmental assessment, contact LEAP at 457-8583.

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